

22,000 members throughout the United States and Puerto Rico will celebrate its 100th anniversary on March 27, 2011. For 100 years, its volunteer efforts have supported the needs of the country and of local communities, making it the country's oldest American service organization operating exclusively in this country.

I would like to specifically recognize the clubs in the Fifth Congressional District of Texas—Garland Noon Exchange, Mesquite Noon Exchange, Rowlett Noon Exchange, and Lake Highlands Exchange. Members of these clubs give countless hours to the prevention of child abuse, youth projects, and other community service projects. Exchange Club members also promote the American spirit through their core values of family, community, and nation.

This organization provides an invaluable service to those in the community who truly need assistance. Over the years, thousands of individuals and families have been blessed by the men and women of the Exchange Clubs.

I am pleased today to recognize the Exchange Clubs for their contributions to Dallas County. To all the men and women who give of their time and efforts so generously, on behalf of all the constituents of the Fifth District, I would like to extend our most sincere gratitude.

IN HONOR OF JIM MANNASSERO

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor today to raise a glass of scotch in memory of Jim Mannassero, who died late last year following a brief illness. Jim was a giant among giants in the Salinas Valley's \$4 billion produce industry. He was involved for decades in vegetable production at all levels and was admired as a true leader by colleagues and competitors alike. So while you may have never heard of Jim Manassero, I can guarantee that every member of Congress has eaten something that Jim helped to grow.

Those fortunate enough to know Jim will remember his gravely voice—a voice that he never hesitated to use to tell it as he saw it. Jim was always free with his opinions and observations, but he never let those opinions stray from his own deep knowledge and wisdom. When Jim spoke, you always knew that there was thought behind his words, even if those words came with a kick in the pants. He never left you in doubt about where you stood with him. But Jim's leadership and authority didn't come from being loud or pushy, it came from unfailing honesty and deep integrity. So while you may not have agreed with Jim, you always trusted him. Jim's friends will also remember his sense of style, with one pant leg tucked into his boot and accessorized whenever he could with a glass of scotch.

Jim worked for D'Arrigo Bros. of California for thirty two years, serving as Vice President of California Operations for the last 25. He was a member of Class I of the prestigious California Ag Leadership Program. He was the current Chairman of the Monterey County Agriculture Advisory Group which counsels the Monterey County Board of Supervisors on issues facing the agricultural industry. He was a founding member, and past President, of the

Salinas River Coalition, where he worked with other Salinas Valley land owners to reduce the flood risk to Salinas Valley Communities and the surrounding farmland. Since 1979, Jim served as a member of the California Lettuce Research Board, serving as the organization's Chairman from 1997 to 1999. Jim served as Chairman of the Board of the Grower-Shipper Association in 1985–1986. Just last year he was the recipient of the Association's highest honor, the E.E. "Gene" Harden Award for Lifetime Achievement in Central Coast Agriculture. The additional boards, commissions, organizations and committees on which Jim served are too numerous to mention but, it is enough to say that Jim did the work of a dozen people. The United States is a better place for Jim's efforts.

Mr. Speaker, Jim leaves behind his wife, Ginny, his two children, Victoria and Paul, and one grandson, Julian. I know that I speak for the whole House in extending to them and to Jim's friends and colleagues our deepest condolences.

HONORING SHEVCHENKO AND ALDRIDGE

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2011

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, March is a month when Ukrainians worldwide pay tribute to Taras Shevchenko, whose monument here in Washington, D.C. bears testament to his prescient writings, prophetic visions for human dignity, and aspirations for the worth of each individual. It is with deepest respect for his life after purchase out of serfdom, and that of his friend Ira Aldridge, purchased out of slavery; that the very idea of liberty took flame out of the repressive conditions of their forbears. Their lives deserve recognition and revelation, decade after decade, so the world remembers and honors those whose paths cleared the way for our own.

[From the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation Update, Mar. 8, 2011]

HONORING A FRIENDSHIP BONDED IN DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS FROM ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA TO WASHINGTON, DC

(By Robert A. McConnell)

While February is Black History Month, a month when attention is given specifically to the contribution of Afro-Americans to our country, our society, and culture, March is the month that Ukrainians worldwide honor Taras Shevchenko. For Ukrainian-Americans, both months are a time of reflection on a very special and unique friendship between one of Ukraine's greatest historical figures, Taras Shevchenko, and a famously talented black American, Ira Aldridge.

Although both men died in the 1860s, one in Russia and the other in Poland, and though both are little known to the general public in America, both of their images are present in the capital city of the United States. A mere two and a half miles apart here in Washington DC stand monuments to Taras Shevchenko and to Ira Aldridge. The first was born a Ukrainian serf who was purchased out of bondage in order for his immense talents to blossom; the second was born a Negro in New York who, because of the color of his skin, had to leave his country to find the full glory of his God-given talent.

At the corner of 22nd and P streets in Northwest Washington stands the figure of

Taras Shevchenko, a monument to the man, his writing, his profound commentaries on human dignity, pleas of help for the plight of the downtrodden and his aspirations for his country, struggling under tsarist repression. Engraved in the granite is his hope for Ukraine: "When shall we get our Washington, to promulgate his new and righteous law?" On the other side of the city stands The Ira Aldridge Theatre on the Howard University campus, constructed in memory of a great thespian talent and as a symbol of challenges overcome, paths revealed for other talents to follow.

Portraits of both men hang in that theater, portraits painted by Taras Shevchenko and donated to Howard University in 1967 from the archives of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in the United States.

Born a serf in Ukraine, Shevchenko was destined for a lifetime of servitude. Yet when his owner left Ukraine for St. Petersburg, Russia, he took the young Shevchenko along. In St. Petersburg, Shevchenko's artistic talents were revealed. In 1838, the city's artistic circles succeeded in raising 2,500 rubles to purchase Shevchenko's freedom. Once free, he became a student at the Imperial Academy of Arts and his artwork and poetic writing flourished. His poems glorified Ukraine and demanded freedom and justice for all oppressed nations and classes of people.

Shevchenko returned to Ukraine in 1845 to find great injustices. His poems criticized the tsarist regime and chided the aristocracy's oppression of the peasants. For these expressions, he was arrested and deported from Ukraine to exile in a remote part of Asian Russia, incarcerated in a military penal facility and, by the decree of the Tsar, denied writing and drawing materials. Despite the Tsar's orders and the incarcerations terrible cost to his health, Shevchenko secretly composed some of his most powerful works while imprisoned and in political exile. Moreover, at the same time, Shevchenko's Ukrainian and Russian friends, including Count and Countess Fyodor Tolstoy, worked to secure his freedom again. Finally, ten years after his arrest, Shevchenko was released. Forbidden to return to Ukraine, he returned to St. Petersburg, where he soon met the American Ira Aldridge.

Although Aldridge had been born in New York, as his immense talents became apparent, he found his opportunities limited due to the significant discrimination against blacks. He chose to emigrate to England in 1824 and began acting in small London theatres. Receiving notice and praise, he was soon performing in England's finest theatres and began to tour outside London. By 1852, Aldridge, the first black to act in white roles in Shakespeare's plays, left for his first European tour. Receiving acclaim everywhere he traveled, he returned to London a theatrial hero.

In 1858, Aldridge accepted an invitation from the Russian Imperial Theatre to perform in St. Petersburg. Shevchenko attended the opening performance and the two men were introduced.

There are numerous letters and notes commenting upon their meeting and friendship. One of Tolstoy's daughters, Katherine, served as an early translator between Aldridge and Shevchenko and wrote about the experience and their friendship. Shevchenko attended Aldridge's performances. Aldridge visited Shevchenko's studio and posed for the artist. They visited one another often and spent time in the same social circles, one that included many artists, performers, intellectuals.

Their friendship was unique since they had in common not only the creativity of their